HARDSHIPS & HOPE

FASCINATING FRONTIER WOMEN
OF NORTHERN COLORADO

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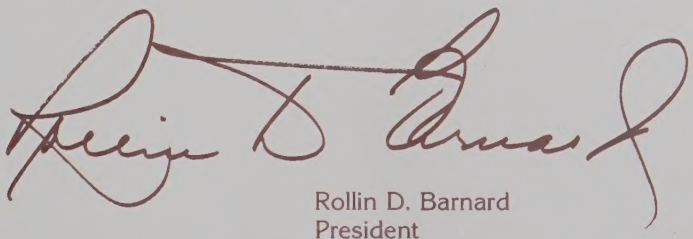
We hope you will enjoy this short volume as much as we have enjoyed putting it together and presenting it to you.

It is a tribute to the pioneer women of northern Colorado. Much attention currently is being given to the status and role of women in our society, but it is important to recognize that women have always played significant leadership roles in Colorado's development and progress.

The early frontier defeated many. Women and men alike. But many more adapted and learned to work with the raw land and make it prosper.

This work is dedicated to those bold, intelligent pioneering women who loved and nurtured our State 100 years ago.



Rollin D. Barnard
President
Midland Federal Savings

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Introduction

When the English travel writer Isabella Bird visited the Cache la Poudre Valley in 1873, she immediately proclaimed it "no region for tourists or women." Yet, being both, she completed a long and rigorous tour of the Rocky Mountain West. She apparently found the experience worth the hardship.

So too did those pioneer women who forsook comfortable Eastern homes for life in a semi-arid desert where the only certainties were danger and deprivation. With their husbands, or all too often alone, they made the desert bloom into the thriving cities of Loveland, Greeley and Fort Collins.

This book tells just a few of their stories. Some are drawn from historical research. Most are first-hand reminiscences, either by the women themselves or by people who knew them well. They are stories of prairie schooners crossing the Overland Trail, of housekeeping in a one-room cabin, of moonshiners and temperance movements, of terror at the hands of hostile Indians. Running the gamut from hilarity to tragedy, they are without exception stories of struggle. In the words of Alice Billings Williams, whose mother's letters appear in Chapter 4, "they are a simple and true picture of early life . . . and bring the past to present, uncolored by the long years between."

The idea for the book originated with the Daughters of the Colorado Pioneers organization in Fort Collins. This organization is responsible for the preservation of the "Auntie Stone" cabin now located in the Pioneer Triangle Park in Fort Collins.

Our special thanks to Peggy Hess and the Daughters of the Colorado Pioneers of Fort Collins, Ronald Friesen, Professor Jack Ogilvy, Gilbert N. Hunter, Hazel Johnson and the Greeley and Loveland Museums.

I

Go West, Young Woman

They called it "The Great Highway" and they traveled it in such numbers that, often, disappointed prospectors bound East for home would block the paths of the hopeful headed West to a new kind of home and a new kind of richness called land. It began in St. Louis, followed the Arkansas River in the direction of what is now Pueblo, cut northward through the present site of Denver and followed the foothills in back of Fort Collins, through Laporte, past Shipps, up Virginia Dale, then westward to Salt Lake City. Thousands of buffalo grazed along its borders, while deer and elk skipped from crag to peak.

The Great Highway was not an easy road to travel. One man who crossed it speaks of seeing Mormon families bound for Salt Lake, their women plodding along on foot, pushing loaded two wheel carts. Many a family lost members to death, often through the dreaded cholera, during the crossing. They had no alternative but to bury the loved one and push on.

This was the Overland Trail, the only established route to the Rockies. To leave that trail and plunge into the desert at random could be an emigrant's final, fatal mistake.

First came the fur trappers and traders, unschooled and rugged. They were men of few possessions and certainly no wives.

Horace Greeley was the first white man to cross the Overland Trail and leave a record of his journey. He did it in 1859 in an ambulance wagon

drawn by four mules. He was bound for Fort Laramie, where he expected to take passage on the Overland Trail for California.

In 1859 came the Pike's Peak gold rush and, after it, dashed hopes. Some of the hapless prospectors, choosing not to cross the Overland Trail again, settled in the Big Thompson and Cache la Poudre Valleys. Most of these inhabitants were fur traders, who had given Laporte its name, and christened the river "Cache la Poudre," meaning "hide the power", or the place where the gun powder is stored. That year, too, Phillip Lariviere wrote of a settlement near present-day Laporte: "There was but one white woman there, a Mrs. LaMarsh." It was the first record of a white woman's presence in the area.

Settlers came so rapidly between 1862 and 1864 that soon they had taken up all the available lands along the river from Pleasant Valley to Platte Valley. Married men returned home to fetch wives and families. Single men took on Indian wives, in ceremonies as wild and unpredictable as the frontier itself. In **The History of Larimer County,** Ansel Watrous describes one such pioneer wedding:

> "First Wedding in Larimer County . . .
>
> "Weddings were not of common occurrence in pioneer days. Indeed, they were few and scattering for the first two or three years after the white settlers began to locate along the streams. This was largely due to necessity rather than choice. There were more bachelors than maids. As a matter of fact there were no maids at all except the copper-colored belles of the aborigines, whom a few of the first settlers, making a virtue of necessity, took to wife. The ceremonies accompanying these alliances were simple and very brief, consisting mainly of a tender by the groom of a pony, a blanket or a little coin of the realm to the reputed father of the dusky bride-to-be in exchange for her. If the tender was accepted, the expectant groom took his willing or unwilling bride to his cabin and set up a family altar without the formality of marriage vows or the incense of flowers.
>
> "On New Year's day, 1862, there occurred, however, a regular wedding. It was the first to take place in the county and the ceremony was performed by F. W. Sherwood, who tied the marital knot as a representative of his brother, Judge Jesse M. Sherwood, who was sub-Indian agent for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes and spent much of his time in Denver, looking after his charges. Just before Christmas, 1861, a son of Louis Cyr, a husky young fellow, called at the Sherwood ranch and inquired

for the judge, who was absent. Cyr called twice after that during the week, and, on the first day of January, made his third appearance and the judge was still absent. F. W. Sherwood, noticing the disappointed look the young fellow wore when told that the judge was not at home, asked if there was anything he could do. Young Cyr hesitated, but finally said he wanted to get married and wanted the judge to perform the ceremony. 'If that is all you want,' said F.W., 'I can help you out. I can perform the ceremony as well as my brother.' This pleased the young man, who said the wedding had been put off a week already and he didn't want it delayed any longer. The young fellow was honest and frankly told Mr. Sherwood he had no money. 'Oh, that's all right,' Mr. Sherwood replied. 'I never charge anything for marrying people.'

"Hardly were they in their saddles ready to start for the home of the bride, than the young man discovered that Sherwood had no Bible with him and called his attention to that fact. Sherwood replied that they didn't need it and that the Bible played no part in his marriage service. Cyr, however, refused to be married without one. Sherwood dismounted, went into his house and brought out a large volume of Shakespeare's works, the sight of which satisfied the expectant groom. On arriving at the home of the bride-to-be a new difficulty presented itself. The young lady had disappeared and, of course, the wedding couldn't take place without her. She was the daughter of Suis Lewis and his Indian wife, wild and timid as a fawn. In extreme bashfulness she had hidden under a pile of blankets. She was soon discovered and on being brought from her hiding place, stood up with the young man and was married by the most intricate and involved method that frontier wits could devise. The service was an hour in length, and was witnessed by two gamblers named McIntosh and Rice.

"After the ceremony Mr. Lewis, father of the bride, insisted upon a marriage settlement, which he proposed in the following manner: 'You make paper that if my gal behave and boy get drunk and raise the devil, my gal get all his horses. If my gal do wrong by Louis he tell her go hell.' The 'settlement' was drawn up and signed and that ended the ceremonies of the first wedding in Larimer county.

"It is presumed that Mr. and Mrs. Cyr lived happily together, as they do not figure in the records of the divorce court."

Meanwhile, another form of emigration was taking place. According to University of Colorado Professor Jack Ogilvy, grandson of a Loveland pioneer, "Women were so scarce that a lot of gals who weren't too good a buy on the marriage market decided to 'go West, young woman,' where any girl who wasn't absolutely hideous could find a man."

By 1864, hoop skirts and sunbonnets were no longer rare along the river bottom.

II

The Journey

Mrs. John Coy, one of the first women to settle in the Cache la Poudre Valley, was on her way to California when she crossed the Overland Trail with her husband in 1862. On December 6, 1907, she recalled her experiences for the Pioneer Women of the Cache la Poudre Valley:

> "We started from Cuba, Missouri for California, the 23rd day of May 1862, three yoke of oxen and a horse. Eight miles the first day, everything fine, until crossing a muddy stream, the wagons were stuck. A man came out of the bushes on horseback. Mr. Coy wasn't very civil to him, and the man said we'd hear from him later. Some of Uncle Sam's soldiers came along and helped us out, and we went on our way rejoicing.
>
> "We had only gone about two miles when two men came out of the bushes halting us, and said, 'The captain sent us after that gun.' We had a small shotgun hanging in the front of the wagon inside the bows. Mr. Coy handed it to him. Then the man said, 'Hand out that revolver.' We told him we didn't have one. So after a brief search of the wagon, he and his companion left.
>
> "We went on into Kansas, we made bread by baking it with home-made yeast in a Dutch oven over the campfire. We traded the horse and saddle for two cows at a farm. We hoped to catch up with a train, but hadn't when we reached Kearney, Nebraska one evening after dark and made camp; the cattle

were very tired and lay down by the wagon. In the morning three oxen and a cow were missing. Mr. Coy went out to hunt them, but saw no signs of them. We went back three miles and camped by the river, staying about ten days while searching for the lost cattle. Many westbound travelers went by, among them a family who had several wagons and were taking all their household effects to Central City to start a dairy. The wagon in which the mother and children rode was drawn by fourteen cows, this being the easiest way to get the cows across the plains.

"We decided it was too late to go to California, and having lost half our teams, we were forced to make the milk cow do the work of one ox.

"When we reached Cottonwood, we recognized four parties camped there as people who had passed by while we waited by the river. We were delighted to fall in with this party.

"In one wagon were Mr. Andrew Ames, his mother and two sisters, Mr. Sidney Stone, and Miss Fritz. In the second were Mr. Platte, Joshua and Orvand Ames and Mr. Lon Rhodes, while Mr. Crane and family made up the third party and the two Snodderly brothers the fourth.

"Mr. Andrew Ames had been in Colorado and started a home, and was now returning with his mother and sisters. Miss Fritz, who had been finishing her schooling in South Bend, Indiana, was coming to join her family, who were already located here (Fort Collins, Colorado). Mr. Crane and family went to Denver, but we were persuaded to come to Cache la Poudre Valley with the others. We made camp on a high bluff near the present site of Greeley. Leaving this place, we reached the Fritz place on the first day of August, a Saturday. We moved into a little log cabin on Monday, across the road, which we later moved onto the land which we took up.

"We passed a couple of camps of Indians, but they were peaceable."

Trail travel was not exactly first class in the early 1860s. Whether by stagecoach or ox team, the journey was slow, uncomfortable, and often dangerous — but not without its special kind of pleasure, as Mrs. Walter Taft explained in this speech to the Pioneer Women of the Cache la Poudre Valley in May of 1919:

Mrs. Taft appears in this photo taken in Fort Collins during Grandma Welch's 93rd birthday party, June 1908. Mrs. Taft is seated in the first row, in the center. Top row — L to R, unknown, Mesdames: Hottell, B.S. Tedmon, Beeli, Budrow, Carpenter, Bean, Youtsey. 2nd down — Griffith, Hoffman, Seckner, McHugh, Giddings, J. Riddle. Seated by table: Grandma Welch. Seated in front of table — L to R, Murray, Rebecca Wasson (S.R.) (great grandmother of one of our authors, Peg Hess), Rhodes, Sevier, Coy, Kissock, Robertson, Brown, Armstrong, Atwell. 3rd row — (seated) Kimball, Stratton, Post (hat on), Grandma Riddle, Coy Murray, Abbott, Viscellius, Van Brunt, Barry. Front row — Sherwood, Taylor, Lawrence, L.W. Welch, and Taft (seated in foreground). Bean and Van Brunt are nieces of Auntie Stone. Photo was taken at 202 Remington St., now designated as historical landmark in Fort Collins.

"Railroad and steamboat travel ended at the Missouri river points, chiefly St. Joseph, Missouri, Ft. Leavenworth and Atchison, Kansas, and at Council Bluffs, Iowa and Omaha, Nebraska.

"From these points the travelers going to Pike's Peak were obliged to depend upon vehicles of some sort for their future progress. There were three ways to choose from — stage-coach, ox teams, or mule team. The stages were Concord Coaches hung on throughbraces, which were huge leather straps fixed to a framework, one on each side, upon which the body of the coach was fastened. By them all jolting was prevented, and in going over rough places, gave a rocking motion which made some folks sick, but was also easy and pleasant. Travel took six days from Atchison, Kansas to Denver,

Colorado, about 700 miles, traveling day and night. They carried the mail and on the inside was room for nine passengers. The fare was $75.00 to Denver until the Indian troubles, then it was $175.00. The baggage limit was twenty-five pounds, and the traveler usually took besides, a pair of blankets or a buffalo robe, and a supply of things to eat or drink. The coaches were drawn by four horses, which were changed every ten or twelve miles at the 'living stations,' and they stopped at 'home stations' for meals, which cost $1.50. The menu was decided upon by the state company, and consisted of bread, meat, beans, dried apples, coffee, sugar and the 'four seasons!' Sometimes there were potatoes.

"Mrs. W. W. Taylor, whose place was located on the trail west of Fort Collins, was famous for her neat and attractive dining room and excellent table, at which was served various kinds of bread, coffee and a variety of foods. She knew what to do with dried apples and beans!

"There were three seats in the coaches, with three persons to a seat. The best seat was the corner on the back seat. Next best were the two corners on the front seat. It generally took 30 days to come from St. Joseph, Missouri to Denver; for coming west by mule train the wagons were loaded. You paid the price agreed, during the Indian uprisings as high as $85.00 including board. Oxen travel was slower, but cheaper. They could subsist upon grass, but horses needed grain, which was expensive to buy and must be carried along. Six weeks was the time necessary for an ox team to make the trip. They traveled about two miles an hour, and were used by heavy freighters, as they could haul more cheaply.

"All wagons were driven independently, until the Indian troubles began in 1864. After that, they were stopped by the U.S. Militia at Fort Kearney, coming west, and at Camp Wardwell (now Fort Morgan), going east, until there was a number of armed men considered sufficient for their protection. Then they were allowed to proceed. At first a dozen men were considered enough, but this was later increased to fifty or more, until the people became afraid, and traveled in very large companies. These companies were called trains as the wagons belonging to one freighter were called. Wagon trains were also made up of single wagons, and each train had a wagon boss, who was sort of a captain of the company. It was interesting when the day's drive ended to see such a company go into camp. Each train

pulled out of line and selected a place for a corral. The single wagons were appointed a place with them by the captain. Each wagon boss stood in the center of his selected place and motioned his drivers into place until a ring formed of wagons with only a narrow opening in one place. The horses after being watered, were tied to the wheels on the inside of the ring. The oxen were turned out to graze. Camp fires were built in the center. Some got supper; others made the beds while the teams were being taken care of; the drivers of the ox teams took turns at night herding their cattle.

"After supper was time for social enjoyment. Every woman was shown the respect due a queen. A girl received homage fit for a goddess — anything was hers for the accepting. I know, for I was there!

"I have known of two companies traveling opposite directions, from east to west, and west to east, to take an hour and a half to pass one another.

"The air was clear, the stars shone brighter than I ever saw them any other place, and the road was a wide beautiful driveway, a hundred feet or more in width; for miles it was smooth as a house floor. Traveling by wagon was far pleasanter than traveling by coach. You knew you were to be a long time on the road and you soon ceased to be in any hurry and you were at home whenever night closed. Then when the journey was done, you felt as though your occupation was gone and a pleasant epoch ended."

III

Founding Mothers

Five score and 13 years ago, our foremothers set forth across this continent to a new territory. Since the world has little noted what they did there, we have seen fit to rectify that lapse of history so the record of their contributions shall not perish from the earth.

Auntie Stone, Sarah Barnes and Arvilla Meeker played invaluable roles in the founding of Fort Collins, Loveland and Greeley. Yet of the three, only Auntie Stone has received full credit for her part in transforming a temporary military camp into a permanent town. Though history books are replete with praise for David Barnes and N. C. Meeker, they rarely mention the wives who worked and suffered bravely at their sides.

In this chapter, we proudly reverse that disproportion.

Elizabeth Stone: The Aunt who Civilized Fort Collins

If tradition's foremost symbols of civilization are home and commerce, then "Auntie" Elizabeth Stone is indeed, as Ansel Watrous describes her, the beginnings of civilization in Fort Collins (Watrous, p. 291). She was the first white woman to become a permanent resident in the fledgling military camp. She built the town's first house and started its first business. Without her, Fort Collins might never have become a city.

Elizabeth Hickock Stone did not lead what today's Fort Collins' woman would consider a charmed life. Born in 1801 in Hartford, Connecticut, she was married in 1824, and widowed 28 years and eight children later. In

AUNTIE STONE

1864, with her new husband, Hon. Lewis Stone, she crossed the plains for Denver. Ansel Watrous' description of that journey hints at the inventiveness that would later secure this pioneer's place in history:

> "Their team was composed of two cows yoked together like oxen, which they drove through Denver, milking the cows

regularly and making butter on the way. In making butter, no patent churn was employed. It was produced by the motion of the wagon, and it was good butter, too." (Watrous, p. 291).

While the Stones were settling down in Denver, the Indians were upsetting Laporte. They attacked the Overland Stage Station there, robbing the mail coaches and killing some of the passengers. Company B of the First Colorado Volunteer Cavalry rode to the rescue under the command of Colonel C. O. Collins. The soldiers camped at the bottomlands along the Cache la Poudre, but floodwaters drove them to a new encampment called, appropriately, Camp Collins.

Old Ft. Collins, 1865.

Even before the soldiers had moved into their new quarters, Auntie Stone, whose husband had become interested in mining property there, was setting up housekeeping nearby.

She did so in a small log cabin built by Henry Clay Peterson who hauled the logs by ox team from the foothills, then hewed and fitted them together by hand. It was the first permanent residence in Fort Collins, and the only one allowed on the grounds by the military.

The camaraderie between Mrs. Stone and the military was to continue for two more years. Fort Collins' first residence became Fort Collins' first boarding house for Army officers stationed at the camp. Next it became Fort Collins' first school house, when Auntie Stone sent east for her

1864 — Auntie Stone Cabin — 1866 — 'First Dinner'. Mr. Boulware, Mr. Frye (corner left), Mrs. Gaylord, Dr. Van Styne, Nellie Smith, Lorin Smith, *Auntie Stone, Mrs. Forbes, Mrs. Smith and baby (in doorway), Katie, Capt. Lockheart, Lizzie Chamberlain, Mrs. Chamberlain, Mr. Frankfort, Mrs. Elizabeth Keays, Will Keays, Johnnie O'Brien.

widowed niece, Mrs. Elizabeth Keays, and Mrs. Keays' small son, Will. Mother and son set up a school room upstairs, with Mrs. Keays as the first teacher and Will, the first student. In December 1909, Mrs. Keays (by then Mrs. H. H. Stratton) told the pioneer women of her first Christmas in the military camp that was evolving into a city:

> "I happened to come to Fort Collins after the death of my husband, Mr. Keays, because Auntie Stone was really my aunt, and my mother was her only sister. After Auntie Stone visited us on her way to Colorado from her old home in Minnesota, she found I was suffering from throat trouble. After reaching her home in Fort Collins, she sent for me to come west with Clay Peterson, who was going to Ohio to visit his people, and to bring his brother, Font Peterson and wife back to Fort Collins.
>
> "The trip to Colorado cured my throat trouble. The Petersons shipped their horses and wagon to St. Joe from Cincinnati by boat and they came by train. I met them in St. Joe with my little son. They outfitted there for provisions needed, and we started on our long journey April 28, 1866. We had a pleasant camping trip across the plains. I still remember Mr. Peterson and myself had our trunks stolen the first night out.

Moved to Pioneer Triangle in 1959 — given to the city by the Daughters of Colorado Pioneers.

"The first social Christmas spent in Fort Collins was in 1866. The soldiers had been paid off and had gone to their homes, except some who decided to make the valley of the Cache la Poudre their future home. Among them were Lieutenants Mandeville, Wallace, and Buss. I came to Fort Collins on the first of June 1866. There was only one inspection of the troops after I came and I thought it quite an effort for them to have to get fixed up enough to stand inspection.

"The Sutler Store, kept by Mason & Allen, was headquarters for everything. Mr. Mason was away a good deal on business, and Captain Allen looked after the home affairs. He boarded at Mrs. Forbes', who lived on the river west of town.

"To keep things lively, Captain Allen planned a big Christmas dinner and dance at Mrs. Forbes'. He furnished everything and she made the preparations. There were quite a number within a radius near enough to participate — the two Cooper girls, the oldest, and Mrs. Forbes' daughter, now Mrs. Rock Bush, were just back from convent school at St. Joe; Miss Nellie Smith, daughter of Dr. Smith; the daughters of 'Ranger' Jones; besides Auntie Stone and myself, who passed as young ladies. There were lots of nice men. At Auntie's were Clay Peterson, father of Mrs. J. H. Setzler, Mr. Boulware, and Mr. Stratton, to whom I was married four days later.

"We had lots of fun in the morning before starting to the dinner. There had come to the Fort, on the way to Denver from Salt Lake, a wagonload of apples. They sold readily at 50¢ apiece and were very welcome. There had been none in the Fort before, except some that had been sent to Billy Hayes, junior clerk at the Sutler Store, in a trunk from Michigan. An apple tastes mighty good when so rare. Dr. Smith and family came down early to go to the dinner and took Auntie and I up to Mrs. Forbes' in their carriage. The rest walked. Carriages were as rare as apples. There were only the Overland Agent Bob Spottswood's buggy, and the one owned by Mason & Allen. Those were lucky that had carriage rides then. They did not anticipate the disfavor of carriages in favor of automobiles then.

"Enough to say the viands of the dinner were cooked by Mrs. Forbes. Captain Allen spared no pains or expense for supplies. We had tomatoes from Denver at 50¢ per pound. Celery we had within reach. The soldiers had put in a garden on Mr. Coy's land. I think the celery was the first grown in this valley. It was hailed as a luxury. There was a bountiful yield of vegetables that year. The frost came early, on the 18th of September, and we all grieved at the loss of the gardens. As we had no fruits, except in cans, we used vegetables in many shapes.

"After dinner and the room cleared, we had dancing. Everyone danced. Auntie Stone's stepson, Lew Stone, who was an expert dance teacher and caller, put everyone right at once. He then lived up in Lew Stone canyon, but he and his wife would come down for every occasion.

"When it was known I was teaching my son, Will Keays, in the small upstairs room fitted for a school in the Auntie Stone Cabin, others asked admittance, until the number had

Pioneer Women of the Cache La Poudre Valley — 1909 — 1st row — L to R — Mrs. Rhodes, McHugh, Giddings, Brown. 2nd row — Carpenter, Gregory, Laudlaw, Scott, Warren. 3rd row — Mandeville, Stratton (Keays), Taft, Barry, Viscellius, Coy, Post, Sherwood.

increased to 14. Captain Allen and others formed the first school district here, and I believe the first on the Cache la Poudre River. They fitted up a room of the abandoned commissary building in a very comfortable manner. Mr. Chubbuck of the Big Thompson was county superintendent of schools. He arranged funds for my payment, three months at $50 per month, but thought that was all the Cache la Poudre would ever be entitled to! Now we have a school system second to none in the state.

"While the troops were here, Auntie Stone boarded the officers and had no outsiders, as military men did not mingle with

straight citizens more than oil and water. After they had gone, a gentleman rode up to the door (there were no fences or sidewalks) and asked if he could stop with her a few days. She said, 'Yes.' He turned away and I asked: 'How can you keep him? You have no bed for him, or barn for his horse.' She laughed, and replied: 'Did you not see the blankets tied to his saddle for his bed, and the picket rope to tie his horse out to get his own feed?' All he wanted was his meals and a roof to sit under. The man was a representative of the **Rocky Mountain News**, canvassing the new settlement. On his return to Denver he sent me the paper for a year."

At that chance encounter with a "straight" shelter-seeking gentleman, Auntie Stone's cabin metamorphosed from boarding house into hotel — another Fort Collins first. The Indian threat diminished, the soldiers abandoned camp, and an influx of settlers replaced them. Auntie Stone, a widow once more, set about the task of creating a town in earnest.

It was 1866, a mere two years after Auntie Stone had first arrived in Fort Collins. Already her tiny cabin had served as a boarding house, a school, a hotel. Now she teamed with H. C. Peterson, builder of that versatile piece of history, to construct what Watrous calls "one of the prime necessities of civilization" (Watrous, p. 292), a mill for converting wheat into flour. The pair completed the project in 1868. Three years later, entrepreneur Auntie was at it again, this time in the brickyard business that produced the first brick ever made in northern Colorado. With the fruits of her business, she built the first brick house in Fort Collins.

Her forays into business were not the only marks of civilization Elizabeth Stone left on Fort Collins. According to Watrous, the presence of their kindly Christian "Auntie" tamed the "wild, sometimes reckless, natures of the soldiers stationed there" and "exerted a wholesome influence and restrained them from the indulgence of demoralizing excesses, so common among men of the frontier, away from the civilizing influences of home and dear friends." (Watrous p. 291).

Auntie Stone was indeed an ardent Christian. She contributed to every church erected in Fort Collins, and opened her cabin doors to all of the town's ministers. An equally ardent temperance advocate, Auntie Stone was among the original organizers of a Woman's Christian Temperance Union. When Colorado became the second state in the country to grant women suffrage, Auntie Stone, in 1894, cast her first vote for the Prohibition Ticket. The following year, her son wheeled the aging woman to the polls once more, where she cast her second and final Prohibition vote.

On December 4, 1895, Elizabeth Stone died at the age of 94. Two days later she was buried in Grandview Cemetery. The city's businesses closed and every church bell tolled for the woman who had founded the first business, supported the first churches, and had been, for more than 30 years, the "Auntie" of northern Colorado and the mother of Fort Collins.

Sarah Barnes: The Not-So-Silent Partner of "The Father of Loveland"

Where the town of Loveland stands today was once a wheat field, owned by a couple named David and Sarah Barnes. The Barneses, being an enterprising pair as most pioneer couples were, decided to try something different with their wheat field in 1877. The Colorado Central Railroad had just announced plans to put a train route to Fort Collins right through the Barnes' property. So, finding their land better suited to growing towns than wheat, David and Sarah laid out and planned a town there, which they named after the president of the Colorado Central Railroad, and their personal friend, W. A. H. Loveland.

But first they harvested the wheat.

The rest is history — history that hails David Barnes as the father and founder of Loveland; history that occasionally honors Sarah Barnes with a sentence or a photograph, hailing her as the wife of the father and founder of Loveland.

But a few records and documents unearthed by the Loveland Museum reveal that David didn't do it all alone. When the Barneses got down to business, Sarah was always a not-too-silent partner.

Just how large a role did Sarah play in the founding of Loveland and other Barnes family business dealings? Suffice it to say that the transaction for the land between 1st and 6th and Lincoln and Garfield Streets was made in Sarah's name, not David's — and that in 1871 an irrigation ditch was incorporated in the names of Sarah Barnes and her son, Samuel, not David. When judgments were made against the family in 1874-75, they were made against Sarah and Samuel, not David. So evident was Sarah's presence in the family business that a farmworker brought suit against her for failure to pay wages. He was under the mistaken impression that Sarah, not David, owned the farm.

In 1926 the Barnes' daughter, Lena, recounted her memories of those long-ago days to the Loveland Current Events Club. The speech gives little clue to Sarah's role in the events it describes. But it does provide today's Lovelanders with a vivid picture of their town's beginnings:

"I know we are all proud of our little city nestled in the foothills called the Gateway to Estes Park.

"It was in 1870 that my father David Barnes purchased 320 acres from the railroad company on the bluff north of the Big Thompson River. We were living in Golden at that time. So in 1873 we moved up here, then a bleak prairie, nothing in sight but prairie dogs, rattlesnakes and hoot owls.

"The H. B. Chubbucks and two or three others were all that had ventured up on high ground. Chubbuck got out the first irrigating ditch, known now as the English Ditch.

"Our family consisted of mother, father, my twin brother David Jr., my youngest sister Maud, and myself, then a girl of 16, all the rest of our family being married and gone. We commenced in earnest to farm, plowing and fencing and sowing our 320 acres, and, then, as dry land farming wasn't thought of in those days, we had to haul water to irrigate, and Father hired surveyors and they surveyed what is known today as the Barnes Ditch.

"Well, that year, in 1873, we had one of the most beautiful fields of wheat, oats and buckwheat that I have ever seen, and then the grasshoppers came from Kansas in such hordes, that the air was so full of them that we couldn't see the sun all day. And by night our beautiful field was as bare as the road, and the grasshoppers laid their eggs and when the crop came up next spring, the young hoppers took that also, so we planted three crops before we realized any profit from the farm.

"We had to haul our grain to Longmont by team as there was a mill there and I think the railroad was built and running to Longmont from Denver. To Longmont from the Big Thompson meant 17 miles across a bleak prairie, to haul our grain. I was always looking out for my twin brother and when he wasn't home by dark, there was always a candle placed in an upper window, so he could see and not get lost.

"In the spring of 1877, the Colorado Central Railroad Co. decided to put a road through to Ft. Collins. We were very happy, so when they came to survey the road, they found their best grade would be through our wheat field, instead of putting it down at Old St. Louis. They were pretty angry at not getting the road through their town, which consisted of a general store,

owned, and run by the Smith brothers, James and Sherman. There was the flour mill built by Mr. Andrew Douty, but at the time when we came, was run by the Leonards. Mrs. Sullivan owned and ran the hotel. Dr. Taylor had a drug store and office and the post office. The Tom Johnson place, Woolvertons and a few other homes was what constituted St. Louis, where we went to Church across the Hollowell Bridge in the school house. Father gave the railroad company the right of way thru our field and by the time our grain was harvested, they commenced grading the road, and in November of 1877 they ran the first train to Ft. Collins on Thanksgiving day. That year I was married to Theodore Chubbuck and they stopped at our house and let us board the train. (Barnes house at 118 Ernest Place.) They commenced that fall to lay out a town and in the spring of 1878, building commenced in earnest, Father giving every other block to the R. R. Co.

"Hersinger and Harter commenced to build the building where the Loveland National Bank held forth so long. (141 E. 4th.) They built a general store there. The Depot was of red brick but has been torn down and replaced by our present one; the section house only recently torn down was erected at the time. Ned Naveu, commonly known as 'Red Ned', had a blacksmith shop across from the section house. (He had come up from St. Louis.) Mrs. Blinn built a boarding house south of 4th St. and on that same ground was built our first saloon, the 444. Mrs. Hopkins built a boarding house where the Lovelander stands now. (4th & RR.). Dr. Taylor moved up from St. Louis and had a drug store next to Mrs. Hopkins.

"Father gave out the word that for the first churches that would be built, he would give the lots they were to select as their location. The U.P. and the M.E. were the first to build. The U.P. was built on the corner of Lincoln & 4th (Dan Y. Drug). The M.E. built a small frame building still standing just north of Mrs. Mary Hersinger's house (torn down). The minister lived upstairs, and held services downstairs. The first choir I know about in the M.E. Church was Sadie Quigley Campell, Lulu Derby Grimes, Lena Chubbuck Gifford, Mr. Steele and a Mr. Bowman, and a Mr. Day. Mrs. Louise Osborn was our organist. Rev. W. H. McCreery was the pastor of the U.P. Church at that time.

"After the town was laid out, Father went down on the Platte River and had two carloads of cottonwood trees sent up, and set them around each block. Some of them happened to be the

cotton-bearing trees and some of the people of today are making such a fuss about them, and having them chopped down. I always feel when they are chopping the dear, old trees down, like saying, 'Woodsman, spare that tree.' If they are considered a nuisance now, they were a Godsend then, as they were all the shade there was.

"Well, the next thing was to get a name suitable for the little town. Mr. W.A.H. Loveland, a friend and neighbor of our family, when we lived in Golden, was superintendent of the Colorado Central R.R., so he suggested calling it Barnesville, but Father and Mother both objected to that name, so as Father and Mother had the naming of it, they called it Loveland.

"We had as our doctors, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Youtsey, and Dr. Sutherland.

"Our farm was bounded on the west by Garfield, on the east by Monroe, on the north by 14th St. and on the south by 1st St. Of the men who helped us I can only remember John Hahn, Oswald Allen, Charlie Humphrey, William Berner, and our dearly loved neighbor Lucas Brandt, who helped to survey the Barnes Ditch.

"Judge Osborn built the first nice dwelling in town (Museum). The little house across from the Depot where Mrs. Riker lived and died was the first brick building in the city, having been built for my Father's office . . . ."

Arvilla Meeker's tragic Utopia

"I propose to unite with the proper persons in the establishment of a colony in the Colorado Territory.

"The land which I have seen is well watered with streams and springs, there are beautiful pine groves, the soil is rich, the climate is healthful, grass will keep the stock year round, coal and stone are plentiful, and a well-traveled road runs through the property. . . . In addition, the Rocky Mountain scenery is the grandest and most enchanting in America. I have never seen a place which presents so many opportunities."

So read N.C. Meeker's famous "call' in the December 4, 1869 issue of Horace Greeley's **New York Tribune**. The men he sought to answer his appeal were temperate men, "moral and religious sentiments" and "at the same time, tolerance and liberality . . . ." Together they would establish

the Union Colony at Greeley, Meeker's Western Utopia.

More than 30 years later, Meeker's wife, Arvilla, was to describe those days as "mingled experience of joy and sorrow . . . poetic beauty . . . and tragic events."

The tragedy that invaded Meeker's Utopia sprang from a lack of "tolerance and liberality" in the Colony founder himself. A stern and deeply religious man, earnestly committed to the ideal of communal living, Meeker grew so dedicated to his cause that he lost his sensitivity to others. This lone fault in an otherwise superior man assumed catastrophic proportions when Meeker became a Ute Indian agent in 1878.

Arvilla and their 20-year-old daughter, Josephine, accompanied Meeker to the White River Agency. Josephine was to become a teacher there, and the optimism with which she welcomed her new assignment permeates the letter she wrote her brother in August, 1878:

> "I can hardly tell yet whether my next four years work will be among the Indians or not, but if it is I am determined to make it a success . . . I like the Indians very much, most of them are agreeable; they come into our rooms whenever they feel like it, and if there are no seats, the bed suits them quite as well; so we do not get lonesome any. Father is to have the Agency moved next spring. Five of the Greeley boys are expected to commence work on the new Agency.
>
> "I am not sorry that I came here, though I was obliged to give up a good situation where I was learning more in a day than I do here in a month . . ."

Josephine's hopeful words were soon to assume a horrible irony. In 1879, the Utes attacked the White River Agency, killing Meeker, wounding Arvilla, and taking Arvilla and Josephine captive.

The planned move of Agency headquarters mentioned in Josephine's letter was among the mistakes that led to the Meeker Massacre. Meeker proposed to place the Agency on the grounds where the Utes grazed their ponies; deprived of ponies, the Indians would no longer be able to hunt. It was one of many Meeker efforts to turn the nomad Utes into farmers — a goal so central to Meeker's Utopian vision that he threatened to "cut every Indian down to the bare starvation point if he will not work."

In his zeal to civilize the Utes overnight, Meeker ignored the tribal ethic that defined manual labor such as farming as "women's work," and therefore

humiliating to men. Meeker's attempt to prevent the sale of firearms on the reservation — another essential to the Utes, who subsisted on wild game — compounded the indignity that ultimately prompted the massacre. Colorado Governor Pitkin gave an accurate assessment of Meeker when he said, "A purer and better man . . . was never appointed to an Indian Agency," but added that Meeker did not understand the Indians sufficiently.

For that lack of understanding, Arvilla and Josephine paid almost as dearly as Meeker himself. Both survived captivity, but the ordeal broke Josephine's health and spirit, and she died in her early twenties. Sixty-five-year old Arvilla kept her spirit intact and lived on for more than two decades. But her wounds were never to heal. In March of 1897 Arvilla retold the event for her children and for history, in a letter that bares her spirit, her wounds, and her profound devotion to her God, to her husband, and to Greeley:

> "April 8th, 1844 I was married to Nathan Cook Meeker of the town then called Euclid — now East Cleveland in the State of Ohio. Our union was one of love on both sides, and to us were born two sons and three daughters. I have been the wife of a horticulturist, the wife of a merchant, the wife of an editor and the wife of an Indian agent, but I have had but one husband. I have lived in six different states including the one in which I was born. I have passed through an Indian massacre in which my husband was killed by Ute Indians. Alas! for Arvilla — 'The bird of broken wing never soared again so high.'
>
> "Myself and daughter were made captive by these cruel savages, living with them in their families 23 days. In the meantime we were traveling through the Rockies on Indian ponies. While traveling with them we saw many of the wild and exciting scenes of their savage nature. Such as singing when a child was sick — Pow-wows and the like.
>
> "One time the Chief's little boy about 18 months old fell very sick, and his mother brought him to me to cure. This placed me in a very serious condition. If I refused most likely they would kill me. And if I doctored the child and he died my life must pay the forfeit. I said I have no medicine. So she gives me three or four different kinds of Homeopathic pellets, the same I had given them just before the outbreak. You see they thought so much of my medicine they had laid in for a share.
>
> "Well, I took some of the pellets and gave them to the squaw

telling her to give the child two every hour until better. Of course the silent prayer for the blessing was asked, and it was answered. Two days later the mother brought the child to me, it looking bright and well. The squaw laughingly said 'Peates heap cure,' 'Peates' being the name by which they called me, meaning the mother of Utes. Let no one think little ailed the child. If I was any judge the child was very sick and suffering much.

"I always think the Lord was very near me during my captivity. I was so strengthened to bear what was put upon me. Besides, when dangers threatened me, some Indian with a smile and look of kindness would come to my rescue, telling me what to do. More than once when I was about to ride in a dangerous place, some one would come and say to me 'Peates, go round that way' — or 'come this way.'

"One day I saw an old Indian in the Chief's tent sharpening butcher knives; I went in and sat down beside him. He looked very grave and every once in a while he tried the blade with his finger to see if it were sharp. There were twelve bright new knives they had stolen from the Agency. I asked him what they were going to do with the knives; he shook his head, looked very wise, said, 'don't know, mebby to stab Peates.' I smiled to think how he would like to frighten me. Pretty soon he looked at me and said, 'why you no skeered, no fraid?' I said, 'Great Spirit loves Peates. Great Spirit no like Indian hurt Peates.' On one or two other occasions when they thought I would or should be afraid, they asked the same question and I gave the same answer.

"One night I had a dream in which the troubles of a long journey home were vividly portrayed. But a voice made known to me, that I should finally reach Greeley. I felt the truth of this and it was a comfort to me all the way of my intricate journey. I had this dream or vision only a few nights before the Massacre.

"Sixteen years have passed since I found myself safely housed again in my old home. But I have not forgotten that the people of Greeley, on my arrival, paid the most profound respect to the widow of him who founded their City. As I alighted from the cars, I was astonished to see the crowd. Nearly all the people of the town were at the Depot, and their pleasant, but sad faces, and earnest look showed the deep interest they had in our escape. And more as our carriage turned towards home —

behold! A sheet of white canvas stretched across the street under which we rode having the words printed in large capital letters, 'Mother, welcome home.' " Letters of Josephine and Arvilla Meeker, compliments of the Greeley Museum.

IV

Home and Hearth:

The Letters of a Pioneer Wife

"The man, the war horse, the cannon do not conquer a country; it is the woman and the home. The frontier began with grains of gold and ended with golden grains." Chauncey Thomas, **Trail Magazine**

When a woman's place is in the home and the home is in the Colorado frontier, then her work is truly never done. While Auntie Stone and Sarah Barnes were civilizing northern Colorado with their business ventures, hundreds of young pioneer wives were conquering the West within the confines of a one-room cabin. Yet, no matter how domestic and cozy they made their little fortresses, they could not deny the rugged frontier that lay outside the door.

Indian threats, grasshopper plagues, wind and hail storms that obliterated tenderly planted gardens, and the lack of all but the most rudimentary household items, all conspired to intensify the housewife's travails. Grandma Welch, one of Greeley's earliest settlers, reached her new home on a cold and windy day, only to find the house that was to have been finished still without doors or windows. She had to carry her water about two blocks, from one of the town's two wells. And when she planted gourds in hopes of raising a vine to sit under (because there were no trees), a vicious windstorm blew the seeds away.

Despite such odds, the pioneer housewives were "people of tremendous hope and energy who could do a simply incredible amount of work," says Jack Ogilvy, who was growing up in northern Colorado when those women were growing old. He recalls how "these old country gals would stand there and beat up batter for half an hour and developed some pretty strong arm muscles. If the woman ever had to do something for five minutes, and handed the batter to her husband, it'd be really funny. Here

would be this little flyweight woman and this big oaf of a man, and by the time he'd done five minutes of using those unaccustomed muscles, his arm was about to fall off."

They were hospitable women too, welcoming with the genuine friendliness born of mutual struggle, stranger and neighbor alike to their sparse cabins and sumptuous tables. "People were so thin on the ground in those days," remembers Ogilvy, "that if they dropped in anywhere near meal time, you fed them. It always impressed me how, when people would appear out of nowhere around 11:30, these pioneer gals would somehow manage to cook up a pretty good lunch. And they expected you to stay."

One can only wonder how such a strong stock of women must have chuckled when they read this account of themselves in the November 23, 1870 issue of the **Greeley Tribune**:

THE WOMEN

"Perhaps a majority of our married women have taught school, and many of the unmarried ones have. The disagreeable condition in which they have been placed for want of comfortable homes has given to many a sad cast of countenance, and some have scarcely appeared in public. Of late, and since houses have been plastered and conveniences have multiplied, a change for the better in the appearance of the women has been apparent, and the congregation at church is much more elegant and cheerful than it was two months ago. The truth is a woman is weak unless she can have a comfortable house; and a man is not only weak but untidy unless he has a housekeeper.

"As to intellect, the women are fully equal to the men and they only lack drill and wider means of obtaining information. Many of the females are remarkable for large perceptive and reflective powers, and these, often, are in excess of their vitality. Generally, this climate is having a favorable influence on the health of our women, and the hopeful condition of the colony in most respects, adds to the tonic given by the pure air. It is to be said that both the men and women of this Colony are select, for they were alike receptive of the aims and objects of education, of refined society, of temperance, and of elegant suburban homes; and they have gathered from many widely separated regions, to realize these ideas. In dress, our women show a refined and simple taste which everywhere is an outgrowth of culture, and the display of it at church and at the lyceum adds

greatly to the high character of the audience. It is doubtful whether any assemblage in any of the states can present better dressed ladies. Nor should this surprise, since they have come from New York, from Brooklyn, from the towns and cities of New England, from Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, and other more or less important places in the east, or, if from country places, they had intimate friends in these cities, and thus, whatever distinguishes there, also distinguishes here."

Wisconsin-born Lucy Billings was a pioneer wife who was among the first to arrive at the Union Colony at Greeley in 1870. Her letters to her mother bespeak the utter simplicity of her life — and the difficulty with which those simple things were done. Yet always there is an undercurrent of strength and unwavering dedication to the town and the lifestyle she had chosen to make her own.

THE LETTERS

May 22, 1870

"I did not feel very much afraid of Indians on the way tho they were about. One station we passed was attacked the night before. Soldiers were stationed there to protect the track. They said there was no danger from Indians here, yet I cannot help being some afraid.

"Jesse never goes to bed without gun and revolver where he can put his hands on them. The Colony is well armed and there would be no danger from anything but a surprise. I hope for the best.

"There has been a great change in the two weeks I have been here. When we came there were three houses and three or four tents. Now there are as many as twenty-five houses, such as they are, and a large number of tents. There would have been more houses if there had been lumber.

"We moved into our own house last Friday. Our goods came on Thursday. We took out our mattress and had a comfortable bed for the first time in Greeley. I tell you Jesse was glad he brought it.

"I will describe our house. It is better than most of the houses in Greeley. It is twelve feet by eighteen, all in one room. It is not plastered. That is to be done in the future when lime can be had.

Jesse says it will have to be done before winter and a bedroom built on also. There are three windows, or will be when we get fixed. Two of them are boarded up yet. Jesse is going to make me a large cupboard for a pantry and we have a hole dug under the floor with a tight box fitted in a trap door, to put milk and butter in to keep it cool.

"Our house is built of matched boards so it is warm and strong and the wind does not stir it at all. My things came all right. Nothing was broken. I don't know about my sewing machine yet as we have not set it up. My bureau was rubbed some but Jesse says he will dress it over when we get a decent place to put it. I am so glad we brought it. It is worth everything to me here.

"I presume you will hear, if you have not already, that the Union Colony has all gone up. I will tell you just how it is. There has been a good deal of dissatisfaction among the members because they do not get as much land as they want, near the village.

"They all want 160 acres alongside the village and they cannot all get it and so there has been a good deal of grumbling and some have gone away.

"Some people come here expecting to see a large city and everything lovely, and when they are set down here on the plains, they are astonished and disgusted. Some go back and others stay and get over it. There are a good many joining all the time, both here and in New York.

"We are going to stay for the present. If it proves a failure then we must go. Within the last week coal has been discovered near by, and clay also, so I suppose we may all be living in brick houses yet. Perhaps the next thing will be gold.

"The water here is all soft. We have to carry it a good ways now but we hope it will not always be so. I am glad you did not come out here with us. At present, you could not have endured the hardships. I do hope we shall have a comfortable home for you to visit sometime."

June 6, 1870

"We are improving a little in our style of living. Jesse is making improvements all the time. Our table and bedstead are both

home made. We have no chairs yet but they say there will be all kinds of furniture here soon and we intend to purchase such articles as we need most as soon as possible.

"We have a pretty stove and a good one. It cost thirty-seven and one half dollars. The furniture with it was a boiler, spider, dripping pan, gridiron, two round griddles for frying cakes, two bread pans, a teakettle, a large coffee boiler and a steamer.

"We are obliged to burn coal and I don't like it. Perhaps I shall get used to it. Wood is very scarce and can be used for kindling only. The Colony has discovered a coal mine within fifteen miles and is working it. Jesse has taken a share so we can have it cheaply soon.

"Sometimes I get very blue, living so rough, but I look about me. Others are living in the same way and worse, and making the best of it and I try to make the best of it too. We are all perfectly well and that is a great blessing.

"The past week has been pleasant indeed. You pity me because I must live in the same room with my stove. I haven't seen a night or morning yet when a fire was uncomfortable, and some days, we have kept fire all day to keep warm. The Rocky Mountains, only about eighteen miles away, are covered with snow.

"We have one improvement in the past week, a well dug near us of beautiful soft water, very pure. The river water which is to be brought over town for irrigation is pure soft water.

"Lumber is high here and almost impossible to get but we expect it will be cheaper by and by, and then we are going to build a bedroom and plaster and finish off our house before winter. I live in hopes of better things.

"I am going to send you one or two pressed flowers, such as grow all over these prairies. One is a cactus. The flower is very handsome but the plant is covered with terrible prickers. The children get them in their feet and I do also. They say they will disappear when the ground is cultivated."

June 11, 1870

"I am getting all over being afraid of Indians. I haven't seen but one since I left home and that was at a station on the Union

Pacific. Two or three weeks ago there were one or two in this settlement, but I did not see them. All old settlers say there is no danger of Indians attacking as large a settlement as this. They are more apt to attack those who live alone on farms outside.

"Jesse has not had much work yet. He has been too busy working at home. He has worked out most of this week. He gets three dollars a day. If he can get work for a few months, we will be all right for if the Colony continues to prosper, he can put a shop on his business lot and probably have plenty to do.

"We have five acres about a mile from the center and I should not wonder if we move there another spring and keep a cow and horses and hens and raise some stock. All it will cost will be to pay the herdsman and all say there is more money in that than anything else.

"Provisions are high and fuel is high and if Jesse can't get work he will be discouraged but I hope for the best."

June 19, 1870

"Our town is improving slowly. Some are sure we are going to have a large place, while others are faithless. There is one thing sure, if we do have a place it will be a pretty one. It is handsomely laid out and the Colony is setting out trees in every street on both sides. There is a square or park in the center with a large reservoir in the center of that.

"Water is conducted into that from the river and in to all the gardens. We have our garden planted and irrigated. It remains to be seen whether it amounts to anything.

"Men who have lived in this country say we cannot grow anything until the ground has been irrigated one year. We have put in a good many potatoes and such things.

"Mr. Meeker and family are here, living in no better style than I do. They are all consumptive and hope to get their health here. He has one daughter who is not able to sit up much.

"Mr. Meeker says this place will be a great resort for invalids.

"All the village lots are taken and persons joining the Colony now must pay fifty dollars more than we did. We expect to have the deeds to our property soon. I hope we can go to our five

acres and build our home there, instead of on a small lot in the village. Then we can have a cow, hens, etc. We have plenty of water there for the irrigating ditch runs right through the lot.

"We hope to get a bedstead and some chairs this week. It would have paid us to have brought some. Jesse likes it here as well as he expected and thinks we can make something if we are content to rough it for a while, till we can get a start. It is as good here as anywhere. It takes money to make money.

"I have an easy time. Don't have work enough to keep me busy. I can only bake from one meal to another, because it dries so as I have no place to keep it. I have a stone jar to keep bread in. We get good milk and butter as cheap as in Oshkosh. We have a meat market and beef is reasonable but pork is high. There are no dry goods yet but will be soon. There are three grocery stores and a drug store."

July 5, 1870

"I told you I would write again after the Fourth of July. It is over now so I can tell you about it. I believe I wrote you I was going to bake for a man. A neighbor and I made sixty-six pies and nine loaves of bread and he paid us each a dollar and seventy-five cents. Then General Cameron told us he thought we would do well to have a table on the island and sell pies and cakes ourselves. We did so and made about four dollars apiece after expenses were paid.

"I worked hard and am tired out, but I have money enough now to buy me a bedstead and guess I shall get one. There are some here now.

"There were several hundred people here from Cheyenne and Denver and the mountains. They went through with the regular exercises and raised a liberty pole in the Park. There were fireworks in the evening and on the whole we had quite a celebration on the great American Desert.

"I do think it is wonderful how this place has grown. It is two months since we came and there was nothing here. Now, the town is all laid out, young trees set in nearly all the streets and we have ditches that bring water nearly all over town and a great many have gardens growing. There are over two hundred buildings, tho of course they are shanties, just something to shelter. Ours is one of the best dwellings but there are some very good stores.

"Now that lumber is cheaper people are beginning to build better houses and to dig cellars. We have a school house completed and school is to begin soon. Alice is delighted.

"Our prospects are brightening some. Jesse had concluded to put up a shop and had his lumber on the ground, when he had carpenter work offered him, enough to last six weeks. He thought he had better not lose the job, so today he went to work on the building and will let the shop rest for the present. Some one is after him nearly every day and I think the prospect is good for plenty of work.

"General Cameron told him the other day, that the Colony had concluded to give those who took five acre lots, a chance to get eighty acres on the other side of the river for the same price the Colony paid for it, which is about three dollars an acre. Jesse may take an eighty as almost every one thinks that in a few years it will be worth much more. If he does this, and builds a shop, we cannot have much of a house at present. We shall build on another room, a kitchen I think.

"Then I can fix this room with a clothes press and a little more furniture and put down my rag carpet and we shall be comfortable.

"You ask about the Minister. There is no church organized yet. There is a Minister who preaches for all. I think he is a Baptist. Alice and Fannie and I go to church quite regularly.

"The first baby to be born in Greeley came a few days ago. A committee named him HORACE GREELEY MEEKER CAMERON DIXON, and presented him with a share in the Colony."

July 2, 1871

"I am feeling much better. The swelling has gone down and I can move better. I went downtown for the first time in four weeks to hear Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton lecture. I was delighted with the lecture and am stronger woman's rights than ever.

"I am glad we came out here if I do have rheumatism. It is not so bad as asthma and I have never had one bit of asthma since I came to Colorado nor a cold on the lungs.

"Our garden looks so nice. I think we shall have bushels of tomatoes. I raised them from the seed you sent. It is not so much trouble to have a garden here as we have no weeds to contend with. Jesse goes out when he comes home to tea and opens the water, lets it run through the furrows and when they are filled, shuts it off. So we are independent of water from the clouds."

July 9, 1871

"I wrote you last week how nice our garden looked. That same night we had a hail storm which destroyed nearly all the gardens in town. We thought ours was ruined but are in hopes now to save some things. My flowers were all beaten to pieces. The hailstones were bigger than marbles and when Jesse went out after it stopped, he said they lay in ridges all over the garden. It was a terrible storm. I never saw thunder and lightning worse than that night. We had such splendid vines and they are all ruined, and my flowers that I thought so much of, oh well, there's no use crying, we can't help it and must do the best we can but it is discouraging I tell you.

"I have lots of sewing on hand. A gingham dress for myself, two dresses for Alice, aprons for Fannie, four shirts for Jesse, a baby dress and some pillow cases for my washerwoman, a night dress trimmed with embroidery for a lady downtown, and one of my neighbors and I have taken a piece of goods to make into overalls for one of the stores. You see I shall have enough to do to keep out of mischief.

"Everyone is going to the mountains now. We talk of going but we should have to ride sixty miles in a wagon and camp out. I am a little afraid it would make me sick. Anyway Jesse does not want to leave the shop to go anywhere. His business is very good and we are so anxious to get ahead enough to build a home."

July 23, 1871

"We are well and I am getting along very well with my sewing. You were a true prophet about our garden. It has recovered wonderfully. I would not have believed it possible. We have had peas, beans, squash and this morning, cucumbers. Our tomatoes are in blossom and our flowers have done as well as our vegetables.

"If you have not sent us that letter in the **Toledo Blade**, you need

not do so, because every person in Greeley has seen it. It is a bundle of falsehoods from beginning to end.

"The Union Colony is not a failure and any one who says it is either a fool or a knave. Men of good standing, who have taken pains to inform themselves, say that we shall have wheat enough to bread us this year and that is all anyone expected. That any person in Greeley fears suffering from starvation this winter is perfectly ridiculous.

"A great many have gone to the mountains, and times are not quite so lively now, but anyone who wants work can get it. When a Colony has built up a town, set out trees and gardens and grown potatoes and other vegetables, enough to last a year, and wheat enough for bread, it cannot be called a stupendous failure. What in the world did he expect?

"The Union Colony has succeeded beyond the expectation of the most hopeful. So tell Mr. Boyd, if he will come out here I will show him as nice a garden as he ever saw in his life, in spite of the hail storm.

"But if Mr. Miller of the **Toledo Blade**, comes here next winter, he will suffer from starvation if I have to feed him. When saloons are opened and drunkards seen round here, then perhaps I will be ready to say we are a miserable failure.

"I have a new table, a black walnut extension table, oiled. It is a good one and I am so pleased with it. As soon as we can make you comfortable, I want you to come and make us a visit and stay as long as you can be contented. Jesse hopes to build next spring but we are going to keep out of debt if we finish but one room a year. If we do keep out of debt we shall have to go slow.

"We had a lot of Editors visiting our Colony last week. You may hear about us through other papers than the **Toledo Blade** and I think you will hear a different report.

"I went last night to hear Grace Breenough lecture and enjoyed it very much. Jesse said we would go as we had not been to the mountains. Almost every one has been but us."

September 18, 1871

"I have just come from the dedication of the new Baptist Church, the first church building in Greeley. The sermon was

preached by a Minister from Chicago. The house was crowded. The church is neat and pretty and cost over six thousand dollars. The Methodists are building a nice brick church to be completed this fall. The Presbyterians commence a church soon, but the Congregationalists cannot build at present.

"I made Jesse a vest and pants last week and they look just as well as those he bought. Must soon go to work to fix up the children for cold weather. Fannie has not been very well of late. I think she has mountain fever. She is not very sick and I am doctoring her myself.

"Alice began going to a private school Monday. It is taught by a widow lady. She has sixteen scholars and we thought it would be much better for Alice than the public school.

"Jesse is going to do some work for the lady and pay for her tuition in that way and we are quite pleased about it."

Here the account abruptly ends. Her busy, useful and unselfish life was soon to end also. Lucy Billings died in the fall of 1871, victim of the first of many typhoid fever epidemics that were to afflict pioneer Greeley.
Letters of Lucy Billings, compliments of the Greeley Museum.

V

Grandma's Skirted Anarchists:

Pioneer Business Women

"A half-century ago, woman's sphere was much restricted and confined. Her business ventures were mainly in the millinery trade, and the learned profession knew her not.

"Wrongs she has a-plenty, but any 'rights' were regarded as a huge joke, not only by the 'sterner sex' but by the women themselves.

"Exceptions, of course, but the 'strong-minded' woman was eyed askance and the militant suffragist was the skirted (sometimes trousered) anarchist of our grandmother's day."

But for its archaic language, those words could well have been uttered by an editor of **Ms.** magazine. They were actually written by a Fort Collins pioneer woman in 1912. Times change, but certainly none too quickly.

Actually, the lady doth protest a tad too much. While businesswomen did not exactly fill the streets of pioneer Greeley, Loveland, and Fort Collins, neither were they quite such rare birds as our speaker might have us think. What man dared to eye askance the venerable Auntie Stone, hotel manager, flour mill operator, brick yard owner? She was Fort Collins' first businesswoman and no one regarded her rights as a joke of any proportion.

And consider the case of Sarah Ellis Eddy, a woman whom one Fort Collins resident remembers walking the city streets "in a long, circular gored fitted medium-tan skirt, purse at her hip, a man's fitted dress suit jacket and a man's cap, both of black or dark blue — an odd getup at the time, but most businesswomen wore something akin to it." Miss Eddy began as a school teacher, worked in the dry goods business, then opened a ladies' furnishing shop and later a bookstore with Miss Tracy Gleim. The two sold the bookstore and in 1886 pooled their capital in cattle and land in Torrington, Wyoming. Whether Miss Eddy loosed any anarchy in Fort Collins is doubtful, since the newspaper honored her with this profuse obituary when the "silver cord" was loosened on her:

"The destroying angel, as of old, sped forth on dark wings on

Monday evening Feb. 14, 1921, and bore the immortal spirit of Sarah Ellis Eddy to that undiscovered land beyond this misty vale, shrouding the hearts of many in Ft. Collins, in weeds of woe.

"The silver cord has been loosened, the golden bowl has been broken, then pitched at the fountain and the wheel of the cistern has been broken.

"How many homes were brightened by the presence of Miss Eddy, that otherwise remained shrouded in the sable shades of sorrows and suffering, the opening archives of God will unfold at the grand convocation of the final judgment . . . No man can stand up in the court of heaven on judgment day and truthfully say that Sarah Eddy ever knowingly wronged him out of a penny. 'I stand on memory's golden shore
And muse and dream through saddened days,
Recalling forms that never more
Shall greet on earth my anxious gaze.' "

Then there was Ella Yount, banker. She kept the family financial institution open for nine years after Mr. Yount's demise, loaning money at 24% per annum. She should have continued to prosper but, as one pioneer woman puts it, "Mrs. Yount's financial craft sailed into troubled waters" in 1883.

Mrs. George Buss of Timnath introduced the commercial cheese industry to Larimer County in 1886. Her one-person operation was so successful that when a creamery opened in Fort Collins a year later, the manager and owner found he had no local market for his product. He called upon Mrs. Buss to suggest that she market her cheese in Greeley and Eaton instead of Fort Collins — to which Mrs. Buss replied that she could sell all the cheese she could make right in Fort Collins, so why should she go to the trouble and expense of sending it elsewhere? She told the creamery owner that if he was not as satisfied with his market as she was with hers, perhaps he should look for a better one. Right on, Mrs. Buss!

Somewhat in the style of Mrs. Yount, Carrie Shallenberger James rode her husband's coattails into history books as Loveland's first female postmaster. She assumed the job after her husband died in office, then was reappointed by Theodore Roosevelt for a four-year term of her own. Ansel Watrous finds Mrs. James' success "evidence that a woman can perform other duties than those of the household, and that the political enfranchisement of her sex in Colorado was an act of statesmanship and justice." That's pretty enlightened thinking, considering the fact that Watrous was writing in 1911.

Fortunately, today's businesswoman doesn't face the problems of the businesswoman of old. She can be found in plenty of professions besides millinery, a trade whose popularity has fallen off of late. The learned profession knows her now — not very well, admittedly, but they at least have a nodding acquaintance. And today's businesswoman doesn't have to get herself up in some odd-looking outfit, though, come to think of it, we have seen quite a few tan skirts with black or navy blue blazers. And finally, who among the "sterner sex" would dare consider women's rights a joke, or look upon its militant advocates as trousered (sometimes skirted) anarchists? Why, as recently as October 21, 1977 an article entitled "The Corporate Woman: One Man's Opinion" proclaimed in a subhead, "Experiment shows women have intellectual ability."

Which all goes to prove: We've come a long way — maybe!

VI

Some Sobering Facts About the WCTU

In 1882, the ladies of Loveland organized to wage a formidable political battle that was to endure for the next three years. They fought to exorcise the demon rum from within the borders of their city because, in the words of a **Loveland Reporter** columnist writing in 1884, "parties who move into our town will be of the better-class men" and "the absence of saloons gives a moral tone to society."

The struggle for prohibition began a mere year after the incorporation of Loveland. The Colorado president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, a Mrs. M.F. Shields of Colorado Springs, visited the newborn town as the featured speaker at an evening meeting of the United Brethren Church. After her speech, she organized a local chapter of the WCTU.

Loveland citizens were already more or less temperate, but they had until then avoided outright prohibition. Their strategy had been to make saloon-keeping a costly enterprise by imposing stiff license fees on the proprietors. High prices, they reasoned, would minimize high Lovelanders.

But to a group of women bent on improving the caliber of their morals and menfolk, the $600 license fee was not enough. They formed a Juvenile Union, held frequent afternoon meetings, and hosted monthly temperance lectures by the town's ministers. The Loveland Town Board recognized "the women of the town" as the source of a petition to bar minors from saloons. The intense political pressure of the WCTU was

almost solely responsible for the temperance movement in Loveland.

It is probably no coincidence that the day after the WCTU chapter's formation, the Town Board revoked the liquor license of saloon-keeper Joe Belew on grounds that he had failed to pay his license fee. The town reporter testified that Belew was not licensed to sell liquor, but when Belew produced a receipt proving that he had paid the fee in full, the judge ruled in his favor.

Still, the battle continued. The Town Board acted on the Women's amendment prohibiting minors in saloons, and in 1884, the Temperance ticket soundly defeated the Citizens ticket by a two-to-one margin. WCTU President Shields returned to Loveland in triumph, proclaiming that "Women are as mighty as even the lords of creation if they can once be convinced of that fact."

Apparently they were. With the Temperance Party firmly entrenched, the Town Board wasted little time in choosing its victims. They indicted five saloon-keepers; one, a woman named Mattie Johnson, was proprietor of the Bon Ton Restaurant.

She was charged with one count of keeping a house of ill repute and five counts of selling liquor. Obviously, Loveland was seeking a better class of women, too.

Mattie Johnson was fined a total of $550, a hefty sum in the 1880's, and one which Mrs. Johnson couldn't pay. Instead she gave authorities her "fine gold watch," all her household possessions, and a promise to board the Wednesday afternoon southbound train, never to show her face in Loveland again. Says Loveland Museum researcher Ronald Friesen: "The crowd gathered at Grange Hall, site of the train, must have derived a deep satisfaction from seeing the town rid of this 'iniquitous' violator of town ordinance, this operator of the 'guilt-framed' Bon Ton Restaurant."

The victory, however, was short-lived. Just as in the Belew debacle, the Town Board had pushed its luck a step too far. The other four townspeople accused of selling liquor were eventually set free. The judge ruled that they had been denied due process.

It was a serious setback for the WCTU, and one from which they had to struggle in order to regain their credibility. But they took their bruises in stride, and the next year, were able to get the saloons closed again. Then, in 1885, the High-License ticket edged out the Temperance forces. This ended prohibition, and the WCTU, who had once deemed itself as mighty as the lords of creation, lost its power, bringing this sobering chapter in

Loveland history to an end. Background material for this chapter taken from "A Better Class of Men" by Ronald M. Friesen. Copyright 1977, Loveland Museum.

VII

A School Marm's Struggle:

Sarah Milner Smith

Since most of the settlers in the Cache la Poudre and Big Thompson Valleys were educated people, they held their schools — and their school marms — in high esteem. The Big Thompson Valley boasted Larimer County's first private school, first public school, first three school districts, and first elected county Superintendent of Schools.

It also boasted the county's first public school teacher, Sarah Milner Smith. In her case, high esteem was well deserved.

Born in Kingston, West Canada of prosperous English parents, Sarah Milner lived in what she described as "good style" until financial troubles moved her family to Chicago and later Rockford, Illinois. There she began acquiring the skills she would later put to work in her highly revered post as Loveland's school marm. She taught Sunday school, became active in church work, and took music lessons that she would later use teaching pioneer children to march and sing, to compensate for the lack of sports and games.

Eventually, the Milners moved to Colorado in search of potential wealth. Though Sarah Milner was never to find it, she was to find an avenue to history. In 1886, in a rough log building that had been hauled downriver to a spot on the south side of the Big Thompson, not far from the mountain that bears her family's name, she conducted classes for 18 pupils. Four years later, she graduated the first high school class in Larimer County. This is how she describes her work and her play during her early days in Loveland:

"All the older pupils in my school had attended good schools in the East before coming to Colorado. Eight of them took up what today would be called high-school studies. Several were already so advanced that I found it necessary to study ahead of them in the books on algebra to avoid being taught instead of being the teacher. All the books we studied from in all the classes (we knew nothing as yet of 'grades') were an odd lot brought from the East by the pupils. But all my pupils were attentive and anxious to excel, and we made good progress regardless of handicaps. At the end of my four years teaching in the old log building I graduated the eight oldest pupils as the first high school class in Larimer County, Colorado. (Commemorating this event the D.A.R. society of Loveland, Colorado, erected a bronze tablet in the fine high school building in that town, a direct successor to the little old log school house on the creek bottoms, a mile or so to the southeast. I was present at the ceremonies.)

"There were residing in the Big Thompson Valley at the time of my taking the school there a number of young men of some education and natural talent. Lacking other sources of entertainment they came to the school one day on what they termed an 'exploring expedition.' Among these young men were C. M. Brough, a writer; Garret Clawson, a music teacher; Thomas Johnson, who excelled in oratory, and later went to the state legislature to be known as 'the cowboy statesman'; Jared Brush, who later was Lieutenant Governor for two terms; Bruce Johnson, who was elected to both the territorial and state legislatures; Lucas Brandt, elected to the second general assembly; John Hahn, who became County Commissioner; Frank Bartholf, who helped promote the infant town of Loveland; and Edward Smith, who became first elected Clerk and Recorder of Larimer County.

"Together we planned to organize a Lyceum to meet at the school house each Saturday evening to carry on a program to consist of an old fashioned spelling bee, literary program, and a debate on some topic of the day. In all these things the pupils of the school were to be given parts as far as possible. The debates were to be carried on chiefly by the young men, though Abner Sprague, one of my pupils, also became quite a proficient debater. (Abner served Larimer County several terms as County Surveyor.)

"It will be seen that out of the efforts of these young men to

furnish entertainment for themselves, and for the neighborhood, much that entered into the creation of the Commonwealth of Colorado was originated.

"When our entertainments outgrew the capacity of our little log building to contain our audiences, use of a larger building dedicated to the use of the dancers by John Hahn down the creek was obtained. We were wholly without books from which to get material suitable for dialogues and recitations for the school pupils. To remedy this, Brough developed quite a faculty of creating rhymed versions of any incident or story read or heard by any of us.

"My being thrown into close contact with Brough in formulating these programs finally led to an incident creating much merriment in the neighborhood for months afterward. Brough often came to the Osborn home in the afternoon on Saturdays to work with me on material for my scholars' use; then escorted me afoot to the school house in the evening. Girls of a suitable age to make interesting partners for the young fellows at the dances were not plentiful anywhere in the West at that time. I belonged to the Methodist church which at that time strictly forbade its members to dance. Nevertheless, I was regarded as one of the eligibles of the community, and Brough's growing monopoly of my society began to be looked upon with disfavor by the other young men; especially as I was 'school-marm' and belonged in a way to the whole community. . .

"Our greatest diversion at the log school house was the 'spell downs' held at the beginning of the Saturday night meetings . . .

"In one such contest one of my pupils stood up long after all the others on both sides had gone down. The monotony of the thing at last grew wearisome. To end it and get started on the other features of the program, the pronouncer created great merriment by a well known trick which the speller failed to notice until too late.

"Giving out the word zephyr, the pronouncer followed it up the instant it was spelled by giving out the word heifer. H-e-p-h-y-r, spelled the contestant just as glibly, and sat down amid gales of laughter. To make the contests fair to young and old alike, only words from the text books being studied by my younger pupils were pronounced to them, and then only from the pages that had been gone over. One evening when a visitor had been

asked to pronounce, a word was given to a youngster from a page beyond where his lessons had progressed. The youngster announced with great finality: 'That's too fur in the book fer me. Teacher knows. I kin spell any word just as fur as I have been.' "

That carefree, privileged time was soon to become mere memory for Sarah Milner. After four years of teaching, she married Edward Smith, one of the "young men of some education and natural talent" whose company she had been enjoying in Loveland. The couple moved first to the Pueblo townsite and then to the Arkansas Valley where Edward was to try his hand at cattle ranching. He gave up cattle ranching after the grasshopper plague, and went into the mercantile business. But this, too, failed and Sarah Milner Smith returned to Loveland with her husband and three children six years after she had left it. This time, her life was not to be so easy.

No sooner had the Smiths arrived in Loveland than Edward fell sick with pneumonia. Nine days later he was dead. Sarah and her three small children were left to face one of Colorado's severest winters alone. To pay the bills, she opened her house to boarders. This is her own account of those difficult days:

"Boarding a number of the 'hard ups' through the slack season who might easily just drift away leaving board bills unpaid in the spring, was the great risk a boarding house keeper in the little pioneer towns of the West always faced.

"To take care of my hotel office and help me in judging those who applied for credit, I finally hired my brother, Ben Milner, to care for the office work.

"Three classes of men, however, helped tide me over the slack periods. First and foremost there was the large group of young unmarried men with steady employment — store clerks, carpenters and others serving in various capacities in building the slowly but steadily growing little town. For these I created as near as possible a home atmosphere, and who in return got to calling me Mother. To make the evenings and week-ends pleasant for them and my steady helpers I purchased a small but good organ, though it increased my indebtedness a hundred dollars — quite a sum in those days. Several of the boys could play, and around the little instrument nightly was gathered a crowd of young people from the little town and the surrounding farms and ranches, singing the popular songs of the day or, often on Sundays, sacred hymns. Or the long dining

tables would be moved up against the walls and dancing would be indulged in.

"At that time it was the only place in the town, aside from the several saloons, open nightly for social gatherings. A Good Templars lodge was formed which most of the young people joined. This organization met in the Grange Hall. Masque balls were held there on occasion, and on these nights I was engaged to furnish oyster suppers for the crowd when the merriment ended and masques were removed. This meant a world of extra work for me, but the suppers were a big boost financially. (Fresh oysters came in large, flat tins from Denver packed in ice.)

"Another class of men, though small, who gave me a steady boost, were the traveling salesmen or 'drummers' who in return for meals served them out of regular hours dropped their half-dollars on their plates and hurried out to catch their trains. This, twice the regular rate for meals at that time, helped not a little.

"Then in the spring there were the men from the tiecamps coming out on the spring tie-drives down the Big Thompson. I still did all my own cooking and baking, and on occasions the drives would have fifty extra men, or more, to cook for for several weeks. This entailed staying up most of the night to bake sufficient bread in my small oven. (Later I was forced to purchase a large, 'six hole' range with a larger oven.) In slack seasons I baked and sold bread, pies and cakes to some of the more well-to-do women of the town.

"But it was a killing pace, and after several years of it, I thought to relax by taking my children for an outing in the mountains in the summer time, living in a tent. This did not work out so well. For, although my helpers were faithful and did their best, profits at such small margins ceased as soon as I quit handling supplies. And, once, a new helper brought from Denver by one of my boarders, made way with fifty dollars in cash . . . "

Sarah's career as a boarding house operator did not last long. At the bidding of some of her former students, she returned to teaching, only to fall victim to the changing times:

"After a very pleasant summer in the Beckfield home, I returned to China Row and started sewing again. But here I was visited by

several of my old school pupils of the little log school house on Big Thompson creek. Men grown now with families of their own of school age they expressed the wish that I would resume teaching and teach their children.

"It was now more than fifteen years since I had had any experience or contact with school work, most of that time spent in occupations and places where matters educational were seldom even mentioned. Whether I could now qualify as a public school teacher was a big problem. However, the men exacted a promise from me that I would try to qualify for a teacher's certificate, saying that they could promise me a position in Loveland's new, four-room school building if I could. This I promised to do as I had always enjoyed teaching.

"Having borrowed some text books among my friends I now set myself the task of qualifying as a teacher, and was gratified on taking a teacher's examination under W. H. McCreery, County Superintendent of schools, to receive passing grades, at least.

"After my second term as teacher in the Loveland schools, I was greatly disturbed to learn my application for the school for the following year was refused. My good friends of pioneer days were no longer on the school board. A Loveland doctor, he of the unfair doctor's bill at the time of Edward's death, had been elected on the board, and had refused to agree to my being continued as teacher on the grounds that I was not stylish enough for a 'city' teacher, and that I taught too much temperance and religion. This was quite a blow to my plans as I had expected to pay for my little new home from savings from my fifty dollar monthly salary in the winter time and from money earned in the summer by sewing. So I at once began to lay other plans. But meanwhile the parents of my pupils in the Loveland school had heard about the plan of the school board to drop me out, and at once started a movement to have me reinstated. A petition was circulated among them by a daughter of David Barnes, founder of Loveland, virtually demanding my reinstatement.

"The petition being generally signed by the parents interested, the board acceeded. But I realized my hold on the position was insecure."

Sarah Milner Smith lived the rest of her long life in the Buckhorn Valley, raising dairy cows and stock cattle. For awhile she taught in a small school

there, where she encountered the same primitive conditions she had seen on her arrival at the Big Thompson Valley 20 years before. Unlike the Eastern-educated pupils she had taught two decades earlier, however, the Bighorn Valley youngsters could barely read and write.

Jack Ogilvy offered an apt summary of Sarah Milner Smith when he said: "I knew her in her extreme old age. She lived to be about 100. Granny knew her and respected her very highly. Smith died and she was left to bring up a family all by herself, and she proceeded to do it quite successfully. She was a remarkable woman." Sarah Milner Smith's reminiscences excerpted from **Pioneer Epic,** edited by Eugene Smith, Johnson Publishing Company, Boulder, Colorado, 1951.

VIII

Victorian Manners on the Prairie:

Edith Boothroyd

To any settler, the West was a land of startling incongruities. But to the scores of land-hungry British who emigrated to Larimer County in the late 19th century, frontier paradoxes were often downright shocking.

Colorado's English pioneers were not of the "rough and rugged" ilk of the trappers, traders and prospectors they were to encounter on the prairie. Some of these Englishmen were titled. Many were affluent. Most were products of Victorian England's highly cultivated society. All were quick to notice the difference between a country estate in England and one in Colorado. Having noted this, many returned to England.

For those who stayed, that readjustment was to be but one of many.

"The Americans and the English were helped in misunderstanding each other by a common language," says Jack Ogilvy, descendant of British pioneers. "And both groups thought they knew all the answers. The educated ones got on pretty well together, but the uneducated ones were pretty bad. Damn cowpunchers, of course, thought they'd invented the horse."

One of the families who stayed, Mr. and Mrs. P. H. Boothroyd, settled in Spring Canyon about ten miles from the center of Fort Collins. Those who knew Mrs. Boothroyd describe her as a striking woman, unusually refined for a frontier wife.

And those who knew her inevitably add that Mrs. Boothroyd and her family considered themselves "a people apart" from the townsfolk of Loveland and Fort Collins.

Small wonder. Born in Liverpool and reared in the Victorian mores of urban England, Edith Boothroyd knew virtually nothing of country life when at the age of 16 she arrived with her husband at Spring Canyon. But when a polite young Englishwoman, armed with courage and a sense of humor, lands on the untamed frontier, the result can only be delightful. When Daniel J. Boorstein says of another Englishwoman, Isabella Bird, that "her Rocky Mountain adventure symbolized that improbable combination of opposites that is the American West, and which is perhaps the most American aspect of that West," he could easily have been writing about Edith Boothroyd.

University of Colorado Professor Emeritus Jack Ogilvy knew Edith Boothroyd better than anyone else alive today. He is the child of her daughter, also named Edith, and English-born pioneer Lord Ogilvy. When the younger Edith died, five-year-old Jack went to live with "Granny", who filled her grandson's days with colorful stories of her life as an Englishwoman on the frontier. Fortunately for all of us, Jack Ogilvy listened closely — and remembered.

> "Granny never had any problems with Indians or madmen. Her problems were much more prosaic. One of them was that her skin simply could not stand the Colorado sun. To protect it, she always wore veils and carried a parasol.
>
> "Granny had a dog, a pig and a cat, who always walked over to the store with her. The dog, the pig and the cat — in that order.
>
> "One day when Granny walked over there, four or five cowpunchers were sitting on the porch at Loomis'. When they spotted this 17-year-old girl in her English walking dress with a veil and a parasol — and a dog, a pig and a cat following her across the naked prairie single file — well the mere shock of it was too much for them. They actually, Granny said, had pretty good manners, but this was more than they could handle. By the time she got there, all of them were lying on the porch helpless with laughter.
>
> "Granny thought they were very rude, but 50 years later she decided, well, maybe they couldn't help it. By that time she could see how completely incongruous it must have looked.

"That pig, Old Sairey Gamp — they always named their animals out of Dickens — got Granny into another rather embarrassing social situation.

"Sairey Gamp was allowed to run loose, partly because it was impossible to keep her in a pen. When she wanted attention, she'd come and rub her nose back and forth along the kitchen door and trumpet like an elephant. Well, she'd done this one day, and Granny had gone out and applied a broom to her rather briskly and told her to get on about her business. And Granny went back to her housework.

"A few minutes later Granny heard a sound outside the door and decided, 'Oh, that dratted pig is back.' She jerked the door open with the broom in her hands, and shouted, 'Get away, you dirty brute!' And here it was a new neighbor, come to call.

"There were a good deal many adjustments other than the climate. The first time Granny got together with some of the local ladies, they started asking each other what they did about bed bugs. Well, bed bugs simply were not discussed in polite Victorian circles in Britain.

"One woman, Pinky Wayne, who was a sob sister for the **Denver Post** for many years, moved up to Greeley after she married. During her first meeting with the local ladies, they immediately began talking about how they kept their linens from yellowing in the alkaline water. (Incidentally, lemon juice is the cure.) This Pinky was an intellectual and that was too much for her. She shook the dust of Greeley from her feet and went back to Denver, where there was a little more culture.

"The one thing that Granny always found difficult was keeping a straight face when she encountered something unusual in the way of manners. You have to accept another person's politeness in his idiom. But it's sometimes hard to do when it takes you by surprise.

"One day, for example, a painfully polite young man turned up on horseback and asked whether the gentleman of the house was about, and Granny said no. Well, he blushed and he stammered, and finally he managed to ask Granny whether she had seen anything of a 'gentleman cow.' Apparently 'bull' was an extraordinarily vulgar word, one with which you should not assault a woman's ear.

"Granny managed to keep a straight face. After all, she'd had a good Victorian upbringing. But after she had assured the young man that no gentleman cow had been in the neighborhood and he had left, she leaned up against the door and laughed until she wept.

"Granny's first meeting with Mariana Modena (a scout and guide who was the first permanent settler in the Big Thompson Valley) was also something of an experience. You've got to remember that she was a young British girl with somewhat different standards.

"Modena was very courtly and said, 'We must drink to the health of the bride.' And he pulled down a couple of rather fine wine glasses which were rather dusty, ran his finger around the inside of the wine glass to get the dust out, and poured in some wine. Good manners were rigid in those days, so Granny bit the bullet and drank the wine and returned the toast. Then he handed her what she thought were bits of horsehair until she realized it was actually a collection of scalps. She had considerable difficulty not throwing them on the floor. She wasn't used to handling scalps.

"Another English family, the George Weldons, moved in near Granny, and they were friends for a long time. But they were very different people, Granny and Mrs. Weldon. Mrs. Weldon is one of the few people I've known who managed to remain an English gentlewoman until the end of her days. It was all thanks to Susan Knox, a young country girl whom Mrs. Weldon had hired as a maid, and one of the nicest persons I ever knew. Susan was far more than a maid. She did practically everything in that family — cooked the meals, kept the house, milked the cows. So Mrs. Weldon was able to sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam until the end of her days.

"Mrs. Weldon's first baby was born in the midst of a cloudburst. The creek was out of its banks and the gulches were flooded. The doctor was considerably delayed, so Granny was summoned. There was only herself, Susan and Mr. Weldon. Susan was just a raw country girl, and Mr. Weldon was as helpless as men usually are on such occasions. They put him to boiling water — I think to get him out of the way — and Granny and Susan had the baby taken care of by the time the doctor arrived. The doctor took one look at Granny and said, 'Mrs. Boothroyd, why don't you take off your hat and stay awhile?'

She'd just jumped right into the thick of it and things were happening so fast that she never got around to taking her hat off.

"Pioneers did a lot of that kind of nursing and helping each other, whether they were close friends or not. But many times — and this is one of the reasons the pioneers were so ingenious — there was no one around to help and you had to slice the mustard by yourself.

"Granny had to go it alone one evening when she was driving back from Fort Collins. The bridges they had in those days were pretty sorry things. They didn't have planks, just poles, and they didn't even spike down the poles; so they would roll.

"The poles rolled on one of the mares Granny was driving and the horse's hind legs dropped through the bridge. And there Granny was, all alone. It was getting dark; nobody was likely to come along; and the other horse was trying to panic.

"Granny somehow managed to quiet the team. She got out and unhooked the horses from the wagon, led the loose mare off the bridge and tied her up, and went back. The bridge was across a dry wash that wasn't very deep. Granny scrambled around down there and built a little ramp of rocks and dirt, under the hind legs of the mare — all the time keeping this horse calmed down.

"When she had built up enough of a ramp that the mare could lift herself, she coaxed the horse to step on it and got her up. Then she led the mare off the bridge, tied both horses up, ran the wagon across the bridge by hand, hooked up the team and went home.

"That's one of the most incredible feats of horsemanship I've ever heard of. If that mare had started lunging, you would have had a totally crippled horse — not one, but maybe two or three legs broken. The other mare probably would have managed to fall through and injure herself as well. And here Granny was, in the middle of nowhere, with dark coming on. Riding a bucker is nothing compared to that!

"Granny was also a formidable woman in defense of her young. Once she heard a mountain lion shriek when she was coming back from the Weldon's with my mother and my aunt and a

couple of young men who were escorting them. Granny snatched up a knife and went off to defend her children from the ferocious beast.

"Actually, there wasn't the slightest danger. But here came Granny with her hair streaming, breathless and grasping a carving knife. What the young men thought of this scene I don't know, though I can imagine.

" 'But Granny,' I said when I first heard this story, 'why didn't you take a gun?' All houses had guns in those days, or at least a pitchfork. 'Well,' she said, 'I didn't want to take the time. I had a knife right there.'

"So she went charging off with her eight-inch carving knife. And knowing Granny, I would have given her even money against the lion if it had come to a fight."

If history should ever again pit a refined English gentlewoman against a wild and vast frontier, knowing "Granny" we'll place our bet on the lady.

IX

The Unladylike Lady Moon

While Edith Boothroyd was accommodating her ladylike ways to the frontier, Catherine Moon was grappling somewhat unwillingly, with quite the opposite problem. She was a lady all right — in title. But her behavior was another case entirely.

"She was a distinctly frontier type," Ogilvy remembers. "A very, very rough diamond." All of which would have been harmless enough if Irish-born Katy Lawder hadn't teamed up with English baronet and Colorado cattle baron Cecil Moon. Over in England, Mama Moon seemed rather indifferent to the match until the death of a relative made Cecil heir to the family fortune and title. Then, Lady Katy, mother-in-law, came over to investigate.

> "She took one look at Lady Moon," laughs Ogilvy," and figured 'well, he's married to her. We'll just have to see what we can do about her.' So she hired a woman by the name of Ballou who lived up in Fort Collins and had been raised in New England. Miss Ballou's assignment was to teach Lady Moon rudimentary manners — to housebreak her, in effect."

Apparently, the lesson didn't take. Throughout her marriage to Cecil Moon and for quite a few years after, Lady Moon's eccentricities scandalized the proper folk, mystified the law and thoroughly delighted one Gilbert N. Hunter, U. S. Forest Service ranger assigned to the Poudre district where Lady Moon operated her combination 2,100-acre ranch,

moonshine factory and haven for wayward out-laws and animals. Following are Hunter's recollections:

"I recall Lady Moon well, since I spent many days and miles in the saddle riding her range allotment and adjacent allotments in which she became involved regarding range permits. Lady Moon was of the old school, and believed that everyone who homesteaded or acquired new land in her vicinity was depriving her of the right to make an honest living. Many homesteads in my districts were coming up for final papers, and she would always protest the patent, whether the land in question was close to her property or not. Her activities naturally brought me into the picture, since I had to make final approval or rejection.

"To me, Lady Moon was a nice person, too good-hearted for her own good. She would help any down-and-outer, some of whom proved to be criminals. Lost dogs, cats or any animal that got into trouble were always being taken into her home and nursed back to health. Though I had taken Lady Moon to court and had made a number of decisions that she considered detrimental to her best interests, I always considered her a good friend.

"In those days I was single, and my mother would come up to my ranger station during the summer. Whenever Lady Moon heard of this, she would show up at the station, dressed in all her finery of the fashion that was the go at the turn of the century. My mother was a purist and Lady Moon quite the opposite, but they seemed to get along fine.

"Most of the early history I quote here came from oldtime ranchers and miners who knew Lady and Lord Cecil Moon well. But I appreciate that everyone likes to tell a story, and that sometimes fiction replaces facts.

"Lady Moon was born of Irish parents on May 17, 1864. Her real name was Grattan Lawder, but she changed it to Katy or Catherine. Katy Lawder came to the Elkhorn-Manhattan region in 1883, where she married Frank Gartman. She took in laundry to supplement the family income.

"It was in Manhattan, now a ghost town but then a booming mining town of two to three thousand people, that Katy Gartman met Lord Cecil Moon. The story goes that Lord Cecil was a victim of smallpox and Lady Moon nursed him back to

health. In 1888 she divorced Gartman and married Lord Cecil Moon. Lady Moon was known throughout northern Colorado as one of the most beautiful women in the region.

"Lord Cecil Moon was a remittance man and received checks from home. A remittance man was a black sheep, someone who the family wanted out of sight. The family would arrange to have an allowance sent to a bank in some far-off place (Australia was one favorite place) so long as he was there to draw the money. If he wasn't there in person, the money stopped — permanently. This is probably why Lord Moon came to Colorado. First he tried mining, and when that failed he went to a ranching school near Elkhorn and began investing in ranchland at the stage crossing road at Elkhorn Creek.

"Soon after Katy Lawder and Cecil Moon were married, Cecil's grandfather, Sir Richard Moon, died and Cecil inherited the fortune and title of the Moon family. Even though the ranches had been purchased as cattle ranches, they were in truth little more than hunting preserves for titled aristocracy.

"After Sir Richard died, Lady Moon insisted on a trip to England to meet Lord Cecil's relatives and see the family estate. They took three such trips, but Lady Moon was not accepted by the Moon family, and a rift developed that ended in divorce. Lady Moon obtained all the Larimer County property as well as a large cash settlement. Lord Moon left the country for New Zealand.

"At this point, the history of the Moon family becomes somewhat confusing. Even though Lord Moon had inherited all of the rich Moon estate, he brought suit against his former wife for alimony, and won. Thus Lady Moon became the first woman in Colorado, and maybe the country, to pay alimony. But my question is, what happened to the Moon estate in England, and why was it necessary for Lord Cecil to receive alimony?

"The Moon Ranch on Elkhorn was the scene of many parties. At one of them, the Elkhorn mansion was destroyed by fire. Afterwards, Lady Moon moved to one of the smaller quarters on one of the upper ranches, located at what is now Red Feather Lakes.

"Lady Moon was not a good businesswoman, and in her later

years began to sell off parcels of land to meet other obligations. Her grazing permit was for less than 100 cattle and about 25 horses at the time I came into the picture.

"Lady Moon always had a large herd of horses running around, including her favorite, a pinto named Old Mose who was 20 years old by this time. It made little difference to her where her horses ranged. I started receiving complaints from ranchers about Lady Moon's horses running on their allotments. Every time I spoke to Lady Moon, she promised to round them up. She did, but within a week, the horses were back on the West Lake allotment.

"Realizing that Lady Moon was not going to keep her horses on her range, I impounded the herd. Old Mose was among them, and this, so to speak, brought the house down. The case went before the U. S. Commissioner. Lady Moon was found guilty, and the Forest Service collected damages and trespass fees.

"The trial was the scene of several amusing developments. One is particularly worthy of note:

"Lady Moon, knowing that I was young and new on the job, was relying on the older rangers at the trial for sympathy. She was sitting next to Ranger McConnell, who was in charge of the district which bordered mine. McConnell knew Lady Moon well and, seeing her crying, leaned over to her and said; 'Lady Moon, there is only one trouble with you.'

"She, naturally looking for sympathy, was all ears. 'The trouble with you,' McConnell said, 'is that your bladder is too close to your eyes.'

"As I recall, this pretty well stopped her crying, which she had been doing throughout the trial.

"One night, she called me at the ranger station and said, 'Mr. Hunter, some of the local ranchers are going to cut my bull.' She claimed the bull had broken down the gate, but I knew better and answered, 'I think you let him out.' The ranchers had already told me that one of these days, that scrub bull of Lady Moon's was going to be a steer, because they were tired of having it intrude into their good herds.

"I told her the case was out of my jurisdiction and she had better

call the sheriff. She would not, because she had much trouble with the sheriff on moonshinings. The next morning, the scrub bull was a steer.

"By this time, Lady Moon was in bad financial shape and had started making and selling whiskey. This was during Prohibition. One day, I was riding to Lady Moon's ranch, and to see more country, I wandered off the trail and blundered into a still. I was almost certain it belonged to Lady Moon, since it was on her property. I reported it to civil authorities, who destroyed the still. But they couldn't prove anything on her so no charges were filed.

"Annually, the stockmen of this region would meet at the Livermore Grange Hall to file applications for next year's grazing permit. One year, the Colorado Rangers (now the Highway Patrol) had been alerted that plenty of whiskey would be at the meeting, so naturally they were there in force. Someone had tipped them off that Lady Moon or some of her help would be the sources. The Rangers searched her Cole Eight automobile thoroughly but found nothing. But later in the afternoon, one of the Rangers talking to Lady Moon was pushed into her by the milling crowd. As he bumped against her, he heard a tinkle of glass.

"The Ranger immediately deputized a woman, who made Lady Moon undress. Under her skirt, she had on a pair of overalls with many special pockets — each filled with an old flat 4/5 of a pint of whiskey. No conviction was ever made, due, in all probability, to the local opposition to Prohibition.

"As I said before, Lady Moon was a kind-hearted person, and many ungrateful people took advantage of this trait. All the bums and criminals for miles around would make for her ranch whenever they got into trouble. As a result, the place was closely watched by authorities.

"Once I accompanied the sheriff and deputies to her place. This time they were looking for the robbers who held up the Union Pacific. I have forgotten the outcome of the case, but I do remember that they took the two men into custody.

"Not all of Lady Moon's friends were questionable people. She was well acquainted with many reputable people in Colorado

and Wyoming, and they would come to her aid whenever it was necessary. This, I believe, is the reason why Lady Moon was never convicted of any criminal offense.

"Many times when I rode into Lady Moon's ranch, she would ask me to stay for lunch or dinner, depending on the time of day. I always made it a point to decline. The house was always a mess with ducks, chickens, cats and dogs everywhere. It was not uncommon to see a duck or chicken nesting on a piece of Chippendale furniture. If they were not on the furniture, they were in the kitchen. Even though Lady Moon's intentions were good, the surroundings were such that I couldn't enjoy a meal so I rode on to my station.

"Another amusing story I cannot vouch for, since it was told to me by one of the old miners in Manhattan. The basic facts are correct but just how it occurred differs somewhat in the write-ups that have been made of the incident.

"It seems that during one of the frequent parties at the home ranch, Lord Cecil Moon and one of his titled cronies had a little too much to drink, and over their cups they made a bet that both men would go into Denver. There they would rent a hearse and driver and buy a casket. One of the men would ride in the casket. The other would ride with the driver. At 16th and Curtis, then the busiest intersection in Denver, the man in the casket was to raise up and start waving to the crowd.

"The story goes that when the driver saw all the people shouting and pointing to the back of the hearse, he looked back and saw a supposedly dead man sitting up and waving to people. As the driver had not been given the facts relative to the joke, he threw the reins, the team ran away and the hearse smashed into a store but did not hurt the occupants. They were arrested and thrown in jail and fined. They paid all damages and returned to the Elkhorn Ranch and the bet was called off.

"I liked Lady Moon. Deep down she was a good person, kind-hearted to man and beast. This is the reason she died in poverty.

"Lady Moon died September 5, 1926 and is buried at Mt. Olivet. Her grave is located across the street from the business office. Why her headstone does not read 'Lady Moon' I do not know, since this was one of her last requests. She was always proud that she was actually a titled lady."

Even death could not squelch the gossip. Lady Moon's reputation for eccentricity followed her to the grave — or at least to the typically unconventional resting place that Peg Hess mentions in this memory of her childhood in Fort Collins:

> "I remember how Lady Moon used to drive up our street in her fancy buggy, top down, with her beautiful horse and her fancy plumed hat. When she died, Earl Ismert, the brother of one of my playmates, said, 'Lady Moon died and they have her in Denver. They pickled her. She's in a vat, waiting for someone to claim her.' I dreamed for a long time afterward about her floating around in pickle juice, dressed as I remember her."

It seems that the girl from a Colorado mining town who sought happiness with an English nobleman would stop at nothing to preserve her memory.

Conclusion:
But as Time Passes . . .

Did Loveland's two Sarahs, Barnes and Milner, ever share secrets over baked beans and buffalo? How would the civil Edith Boothroyd have gotten along with the civilized, Auntie Stone? Would the WCTU have stoned Lady Moon, or would the moonshining lady have put them on the southbound train out of town, never to return?

Those are questions on which historians will never bother to speculate. But where history shrugs its shoulders, imagination steps in with an answer.

The women whose stories are collected here are as varied in background and temperament as any collection of women in the Cache la Poudre Valley today. What they share in common with each other and with contemporary inhabitants of Loveland, Greeley and Fort Collins, is simply that they were here. They lived here, they died here, they struggled here, they triumphed here. And they left something of themselves here that is history, and that is alive.

Perhaps Arvilla Meeker best crystalized the pioneers' matchless sense of accomplishment when, on May 27, 1897, at the age of 82, she gave this speech to a meeting of the Old Colony Pioneers:

> "Let our minds take us back 27 years ago, and what do we see? Nothing but a wild prairie and cacti. What did this prognosticate? Hard work, self-reliance, with a determined will

to overcome all obstacles, if we would be winners of the situation. Well, we all remember what we have passed through. And now we see the fruit of our labor . . . showing the greatness of man's ability, and his wondrous capacity of making the desert bud and blossom as the rose. And now comes the reward. Homes surrounded with beautiful trees, sweet flowers nodding to the breeze — the attractiveness of wealth and plenty meet the eye on all sides.

"But as time passes, there will arise those who know not, and care less of the early struggles and hardships that befell the old pioneers and their leader while fighting to plant a city in a desert. But the pioneers foresaw in the great future as it were, the mightiness of their work. And this gave inspiration for its accomplishment. And now the work is done. Our sun is going down. But the sleep of the laborer is sweet."

As we live each day amidst the wealth and plenty born out of their hardship, let us not be the generation to forget them.

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